



The Small Cruise
Ship Collection

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CARIBBEAN ISLAND ODYSSEY

If you have been contemplating a visit to Central America and the Caribbean, then this fascinating voyage through sub-tropical waters could offer the perfect opportunity with its mix of cultural and natural wonders. Every island has its own culture and this colourful mix of island personalities, varied terrain and lifestyles makes for a marvellous spring break. By and large we will head for the smaller, less visited islands and having our small ship, the MS Island Sky, as the base for our cruise makes all the difference. Much of the itinerary is far from the 'big ship' routes and we will discover some of the most beautiful tropical isles. Many are still untouched by the hands of mass tourism and in the San Blas Islands and the Colombian region of La Guajira we will have the opportunity to visit remote communities where locals live following ancient ways of life. We will also spend time in the captivating city of Cartagena and explore historical sites and forts of the Spanish, Dutch and British colonial periods combined with the pretty ports, pastel painted towns, wonderful beaches and the flora and fauna of the region. Such a varied and comprehensive itinerary would be difficult to comprehend or undertake by any other means than a cruise and, in the company of just 100 or so passengers, we will be able to explore in small groups ashore and enjoy a convivial atmosphere on board. As we sail relatively short distances, we have the benefit of full days on many of the glorious islands allowing for time to join the included, guided excursions combined with the opportunity to explore further independently or perhaps relax on one of the beautiful beaches. Ship to Shore: Please note that this voyage is not classified as an expedition cruise although we will be at anchor in San Blas, Cabo de La

Vela, St Lucia and Montserrat where Zodiacs will be used to shuttle



guests ashore.

ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Panama City, Panama.

Fly by scheduled indirect flight. Arrive this afternoon and transfer to our hotel in the city for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day and evening is at leisure.

Day 2 Panama City to Colon.

After breakfast in the hotel we take a scenic tour of the historic old town, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, visiting the colonial mansions and 17th century churches and convents. Continue to the Panama Canal Observation Centre to learn about the expansion of the canal before visiting the Miraflores Locks Visitor Centre where you can see the history of the canal and watch the ships as they pass through. Continue to Colon



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where we will embark the MS Island Sky and sail this evening.

Day 3 San Blas Islands.

We awake in the stunning San Blas archipelago. The archipelago is made up of over 400 islands that line the north coast of Panama with white sandy beaches set in a turquoise sea. The islands are home to the indigenous Kuna Indians who gained self-rule from the government of Panama in the 1920s and maintain their traditional way of life including the production of colourful fabric art known as 'molas'. We will have time to take a nature walk or perhaps enjoy a swim from the beach. Spend the afternoon at sea as we cross to Colombia.

Day 4 Cartagena, Colombia.

Cartagena is one of the most fascinating cities in South America and this morning we will enjoy a walking tour of the colonial walled city which is virtually surrounded by water and steeped in history, with a wealth of 16th and 17th century buildings and churches. Our guides will bring the history of the city to life as we walk its streets and ramparts. We will visit the 16th century Fort of San Felipe, Monastery of San Pedro Claver, the Plaza de la Aduana and Iglesia de Santo Domingo. The afternoon is free to explore further at your own pace.

Day 5 Santa Marta.

We continue our exploration of Colombia in the Santa Marta area which is renowned for the eco-diversity and dramatic beauty of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the highest coastal mountain range in the world, that sweep down to the sea. From our berth we will travel slightly inland to the Tayrona National Park this morning. Covered in large part by virgin tropical forest, the park is home to many varied species of mammals, birds and reptiles. On a walk through this semi-tropical jungle we will be

joined by a local guide who will offer insights into the park's vegetation, animals and eco-system. Alternatively, explore the town of Santa Marta, see Bolivar Plaza and the bustling streets with their eclectic mix of Spanish Colonial, Republican and contemporary architecture to the 17th century Cathedral, Colombia's oldest church. Also visit the small Gold Museum which houses some interesting gold and pottery objects from the indigenous cultures that inhabit the Sierra Nevada Mountains which rise up behind the city.

Day 6 Cabo de la Vela.

Our final call in Colombia will be in the far northwestern region of La Guajira an area of wild desert, beautiful landscapes and stunning beaches that border the Caribbean Sea. The early risers will enjoy a desert walk to the Pilon de Azucar hill that offers fantastic 360 degree views of the area. This is an area sacred to the indigenous Wayuu people who have lived in the region for over 2,000 years since relocating from the Amazon rainforest and have battled Spanish invaders as well as more recently the Colombian Government to keep their traditions alive. Visiting a community, our local guides will teach us about their culture and we will see some of the crafts, including the famous Mochila bags. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea.

Day 7 Curacao, Netherlands.

Moor this morning at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Willemstad. The city has a rich history dating back to the 16th century and the island's colonial Dutch heritage sets a genteel tone amid markets, museums and cafes. Enjoy an excursion to explore the historic downtown district including Fort Amsterdam. The afternoon is free to either explore at your own pace or join an island drive which will include The Old Labour House where



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we learn about the history of slavery on the island, the dramatic Boca Table National Park and the Salt Pans plantation where, if lucky we may see some flamingos.

Day 8 At Sea.

Spend a relaxing day at sea.

Day 9 Port of Spain, Trinidad.

Due to its location close to the South American mainland, Trinidad has a unique diversity of plant and animal species which we will discover today. From our berth at Port of Spain we will drive inland to the Asa Wright Nature Centre. Founded on a former cocoa and coffee plantation in 1967 it comprises 1500 acres of forest providing habitat for a range of wildlife. On a series of guided walks we will explore the area searching for the 166 species of birds. Return to the MS Island Sky for lunch and later this afternoon we head to the Caroni Nature Sanctuary, a mangrove swamp covering an area of 40 square miles. On arrival at the sanctuary we will board a flatbottomed boat and slowly travel along the peaceful waterways and lagoons admiring the beauty of the landscape and a variety of birds including the scarlet ibis, a large bright red bird which feeds and nests here and we hope to catch sight of them as they return to their nests at sunset.

Day 10 Grenada.

Explore this wonderful Windward Island which many regard as the most beautiful in the Caribbean. It is a lush and verdant island with spice plantations, rum distilleries, tropical forests, secluded coves, nature trails and select hotels which cling to the hillsides overlooking the ocean. We will moor in the picturesque capital of St George's before heading to Fort George. Built in 1706 with wonderful views over the harbour, it was here in

1983 that the Prime Minister, Maurice Bishop, was assassinated which prompted the invasion by US troops. We will continue to a spice garden where we learn about the herbs that grow here before we end at one of the island's rum distilleries.

Day 11 St Lucia.

St Lucia is a splendidly rugged island of towering mountains, lush green valleys and acres of banana plantations. Due to its strategic position, the island was fought over repeatedly by the French and British and changed hands fourteen times. We will anchor in sight of St Lucia's best-known feature, the twin peaks of the Pitons, which rise dramatically from the sea to more than 2400 feet. In the nearby town of Soufriere we can visit the bubbling sulphur springs, part of a low lying volcano which erupted thousands of years ago. Our tour will also include the splendid botanical gardens.

Day 12 Dominica.

Stepping back in time, the island of Dominica is still the primitive garden that Columbus first sighted in 1493. An area of tropical rainforests, there are flowers of incredible beauty and animals that exist nowhere else in the world. We arrive this morning in the small port of Cabrits, just below the national park and the former British garrison of Fort Shirley, which successfully repelled a French attack during the Trafalgar campaign in 1805. Here you can climb to the fort to explore the ruins, visit the small museum or perhaps simply wander the surrounding trails on the lookout for birds, hermit crabs and lizards. For the keen birders we will offer a tour to the Morne Diablotin National Park where from the viewpoint we hope to see the two endemic parrots of Dominica.

Day 13 Montserrat.



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Ask any Caribbean connoisseur about their favourite places and Montserrat will always be high on the list. We will discover some of the indigenous flora and fauna at the botanical gardens before we continue to the volcano observatory where we will learn how the islanders coped with the devastation which the volcanic eruptions of 1995 and 2010 caused. From Richmond Hill we can see the impact of the eruptions before walking through the buried city of Plymouth itself. We will also see some of the untouched areas which are as beautiful as ever.

Day 14 Antigua to London.

Disembark this morning and on an island tour we will enjoy the views from Shirley Heights before heading to Nelson's Dockyard, beautifully located in English Harbour. See the impressive Mount Soufriere, Montserrat collection of restored historic buildings which were occupied by the British Navy from 1707 till 1899. After lunch we transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

Day 15 London.

Arrive this morning.



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YOUR SHIP: ISLAND SKY

YOUR SHIP:

Island Sky

VESSEL TYPE:

LENGTH:

PASSENGER CAPACITY:

BUILT/REFURBISHED:

With a maximum passenger capacity of only 116, a vessel of her size is capable of carrying many more but instead the MS Island Sky has the benefit of unusually large suites, luxuriously appointed public areas and spacious outside decks. There is a high ratio of crew to passengers- the friendly crew of 75 crew and Scandinavian captains are experienced mariners, having been in service aboard large 2000 plus passenger vessels and who now prefer a less frantic life aboard a small ship. If, like them and us, you prefer a more peaceful life at sea, you will find the MS Island Sky the perfect ship. When choosing the vessel for your next voyage of discovery, you can select a ship with endless entertainment and impersonal service or come with us where peace, high quality service and attention to detail are the order of the day. We promise there will be no organised entertainment, fancy dress, deck games or any of the usual big ship experiences. The atmosphere on board is more akin to a private yacht or country hotel. A little music in the lounge or bar after dinner, guest speakers, informative port briefings from our cruise director and of course good food which may be enjoyed leisurely in the attractive dining room. After a day ashore you will return to the comfort and peace of a well run and exceedingly

comfortable ship. Your Suite Onboard there are 57 exceptionally spacious and well designed suites. All feature a sitting room area and some have private balconies. The feeling of luxury is enhanced by the wood panelling and brass, which predominates throughout the vessel conveying the atmosphere of a private yacht. The passenger accommodation is arranged over five decks and all suites have outside views. Each affords considerable comfort with en-suite bathroom featuring marble-topped vanity unit with sink and walk-in shower, large wardrobes, dressing table with large mirror and stool and excellent storage. There is a mini-fridge, flat screen television with inbuilt DVD player which can also play CDs and a telephone in each suite. Bottled water, towelling dressing gowns and slippers are also provided for your comfort. Other facilities include a programmable electronic safe, hairdryer, assorted toiletries and individually controlled air-conditioning and heating. The suites on each deck have their own colour theme. Soft hues and blended tones enhance the traditional maritime style making the passenger accommodation an inviting and relaxing place to be. Your Space The spacious and finely decorated public rooms include a large lounge where daily briefings and talks will be provided throughout the voyage and an elegant bar where a pianist plays periodically throughout the day. The bar also features a 24-hour tea and coffee station. The onboard library is the perfect place to relax with a book and is stocked with reference books pertaining to the places the vessel is visiting along with a selection of games and two computers with internet access. Daily newspapers and magazines are also placed in the library depending on local availability. There is



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also WI-FI access throughout the vessel. Outside there is a rear sun deck where meals are served in warm weather under shade, a bar and comfortable deck furniture for sun bathing or relaxing with a book. On the top deck there is a Jacuzzi and further observation and sun deck. There is also a small hairdressers on board with appointments made on request. Your Dining Another benefit of a small ship is the quality of the cuisine. With only one sitting and a maximum of just over 100 passengers, the galley is able to provide delicious meals. Where possible and when it meets his high standards, the chef will obtain local produce in markets or buy the catch of the day from a passing fishing boat. Such purchases enhance the well stocked larders and bring a local touch to the



varied menus.



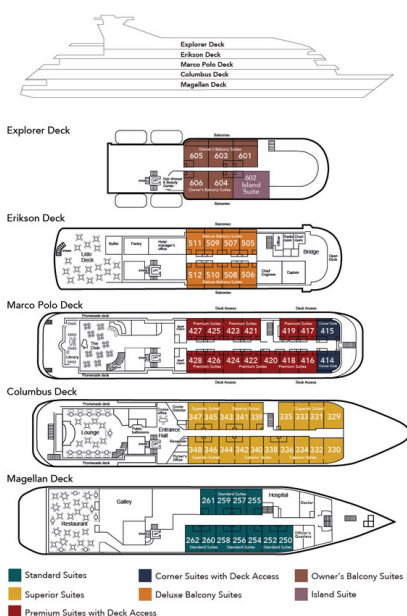
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PRICING



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